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SC 01,RSC 01,USIA 12,H 02,NSC 10,L 03,INR 07,P 04,CIA 04,DOD 01
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9416
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKK 4686
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CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG 1207

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 9305

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJECT: LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS: THE WINNERS IN LONG AN

REF: A. SAIGON 6715 B. SAIGON 8353 C. SAIGON 8460

1. REFTELS REPORTED ON THE CANDIDATES RUNNING FOR THE TWO LONG AN LOWER HOUSE SEATS. THE WINNERS WERE:

A. LE THAI HOA, 47, 9,422 VOTES. CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY DEUTY. AS EXPECTED HOA'S WELL-OILED POLITICAL MACHINE SENT HOA BACK TO SAIGON. LTHOUGH DISLIKED BY MOST OF YOUNGER CIVIL SERVANTS AND INTELLECTUALS, HOA'S HEARTY, BACK-SLAPPING POLITICAL STYLE, AND FLAMBOYANT PERSONAL LIFE (HE IS RUMORED TO HAVE,

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AT THE MOMENT, FOUR "WIVES") BROUGHT HIM VOTES. HOA IS ALSO INTIMATE WITH PROVINCE CHIEF LT.COL. NGUYEN VAN NGUU AND IS THE POLITICIAN BEST-KNOWN TO THE LONG AN ELECTORATE.

B. NGUYEN VAN TIET, 29, 7,651 VOTES. PROFESSES NO RELATION. CROWD AT LONG AN ELECTION CENTRAL AND OTHER SOURCES CONTACTED FOLLOWING MORNING PRAISED CIVIL SERVANT TIET HIGHLY. IN THE WORDS OF A NUMBER OF DEFEATED RIVALS, INCLUDING NGUYEN CHI TRAI, WHOM TIET EDGED BY FIVE HUNDRED VOTES, TIET IS "TALENTED, VERY WORTHY." HIS VICTORY APPARENTLY ENGINEERED WITH ASSISTANCE OF MOST OF PROVINCE'S DEPUTY DISTRICT CHIEFS FOR ADMINISTRATION AND A NUMBER OF OTHER YOUNG CIVIL SERVANTS WITH WHOM TIET STUDIED AT NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ADMINSTRATION. TIET IS A NATIVE OF POPULOUS BINH PHUOC DISTRICT, WHICH TURNED IN A HEAVY VOTE FOR HIM. TIET HAS MOST RECENTLY BEEN ASSIGNED TO THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AD CHIEU HOI.

2. THIRD-PLACE FINISHER NGUYEN CHI TRAI, 27, WHO POLLED 7,144 VOTES, TOOK DEFEAT GRACEFULLY. TRAI RAN A WELL-ORGANIZED AND WELL-FINANCED CAMPAIGN, BUT TOLD EMBOFF HE DID NOT EXPECT TO WIN AND WAS GRATIFIED THAT HE HAD DONE SO WELL. HE FELT

THAT THIS WAS EVIDENCE THAT A SUBSTANTIAL BODY OF CITIZENRY HAD HEARD AND UNDERSTOOD HIS MESSAGE THAT IT WAS "TIME FOR A CHANGE, TIME FOR NEW, YOUNG AND ENERGETIC PEOPLE TO REPRE-SENT THE PEOPLE."

3. "PEACE CANDIDATES" FARED POORLY. BEST-KNOWN, LE DAI BANG, A SAIGON JOURNALIST, FINISHED A MEDIOCRE TENTH OF NINETEEN (3,607). BANG GAINED SOMETHING OF A REPUTATION AS A DEMAGOGUE DURING CAMPAIGN. AT ONE RALLY, HE SHOWED UP WITH HO CHI MINH-TYPE JACKET AND FALSE MUSTACHE AND GOATEE; PRIOR TO RALLY THE FOLLOWING DAY, THE PROVINCE CHIEF PERSONALLY ORDERED BANG TO REMOVE COSTUME. ARVN MILITARY SECURITY PASSED TO US COUNTERPART ONE AGENT REPORT THAT VIET CONG CADRE HAD BEEN GOING FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE IN TWO VILLAGES URGING POPULATION TO VOTE FOR BANG. OTHER "PEACE"CANDIDATE,

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DINH TRONG KY, A BEN LUC TEACHER, DID SLIGHTLY BETTER THAN BANG, FINISHING EIGHTH WITH 4,400 VOTES. KY IS SAID TO HAVE PROFITTED FROM FACT THAT HE WAS ONLY CATHOLIC IN FIELD.

4. TAN DAI VIET CENTRAL COMMITTEE NOMINEES NGUYEN HUU CAN, A LOCAL LANDOWNER, AND HUYNH NGOC PHUONG, A GIA DINH DOCTOR, DID POORLY. CAN FINISHED FIFTEENTH, WITH 3,221 VOTES,

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AND PHUONG A DISMAL LAST, WITH 2,538 BALLOTS. PARTY UNITY AND MORALE IN LONG AN APPEARS TO BE IN BAD SHAPE.

5. VOTING IN LONG AN WAS OBVIOUSLY SLOW IN COMPARSION WITH SEPTEMBER 3 ELECTION. PROVINCE-WIDE TURNOUT OF 80.7 PERCENT, OFF ONLY 2.6 PERCENT FROM SEPTEMBER 3 FIGURE, ANNOUNCED UNOFFICALLY AT 2000 HOURS ON SUNDAY EVENING THUS AROUSED CONSIDERABLE COMMENT FROM VIETNAMESE AND AMERICAN OBSERVERS ALIKE. ON MORNING OF 23 OCTOBER, PROVINCE ISSUED A REVISED TURNOUT FIGURE OF 56,886 VOTES, OR 75.5 PERCENT OF REGISTRATION.

6. ALTHOUGH INTELLIGENCE REPORTS INDICATED CONSIDERABLE VIET CONG MOVEMENT IN WESTERN HALF OF PROVINCE IN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS PRIOR TO BEGINNING OF VOTING, ONLY ONE INCIDENT, A ROAD MINING WHICH CAUSED NO CASUALTIES, WAS REPORTED AS OF 1200 HOURS ON ELECTION DAY.

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